

March 13, 1974

Peter Kiewit, his name is often mentioned on the floor by Senator Carpenter, who in here would know what the man looked like if he walked in here? Who ever reads any comments by him in the newspaper? His picture is never seen. On the national or international level is Howard Hughes. People don't even know if he is alive but these people wield tremendous influence and power and it is easier for them to control a mechanism like a political party than it is a group of individuals who are not operating in concert. It is not a wise thing to strengthen the political parties, it is not a wise thing to introduce additional partisanship into the deliberations of this Body. I have one final comment, then I'll close....I'll sit down. There are people who start out in this Body as Liberals. As the trend changes, and reelection time approaches, you see them going through some changes too because they have placate a political party. They have to try and get the party's nomination, if it is a partisan office. If the Legislature becomes partisan, the same thing is going to happen to a greater degree here than it does not. I don't think an individual should have to tag along behind a political party or special interest group but present his or her credentials and qualifications to the public without being filtered through this tea strainer process of a political party. I'm opposed to this bill. I'll vote against it and I hope enough vote against it to keep it from being seriously considered.

PRESIDENT: Senator Maresh and then Senator Barnett, Senator DeCamp, we're discussing as this Chair understands it, the Syas amendment to LB649 on General File. Senator Maresh.

SENATOR MARESH: Mr. President, I wonder if Senator Syas would yield to a question.

PRESIDENT: Senator Syas yield?

SENATOR MARESH: Your amendment, does it specify that the Body shall be elected on the partisan basis or could we still determine it in the best interests of the Legislature.....?

SENATOR SYAS: The Legislature decide (let's the Legislature) how they....they could actually under this amendment continue the Legislature as a non-partisan.

SENATOR MARESH: That's what I thought. It doesn't specify (inaudible).

SENATOR SYAS: That's right and on the other hand, if they do choose the Legislature to go partisan, they could also go, allow the Independents to file as Independents and run as such in the Primary. I'm watching out for the Independents in this bill because I think of all people, there's more and more people becoming Independents politically, registering that way all the time. And I think the political parties by legislation such as this original bill is squeezing them out and disenfranchising those people from running for office in this Legislature.

SENATOR MARESH: In other words, one year we could be running partisan, next year we might not, right, according to this....

SENATOR SYAS: Whatever the Legislature decides, I don't think they would do it that often but I'm offering the amendment. You can vote for or against it. I'm making my pitch so that I'm in the clear if anything happens. If you choose to turn down the amendment, that's entirely up to you but I'm